

# BlackBook

PROGRESSIVE CULTURE

DEC 2004/JAN

## *Holiday Ritual*

**Sex, Faith, Art**  
and Paz Vega

### **Ritual Fashion:**

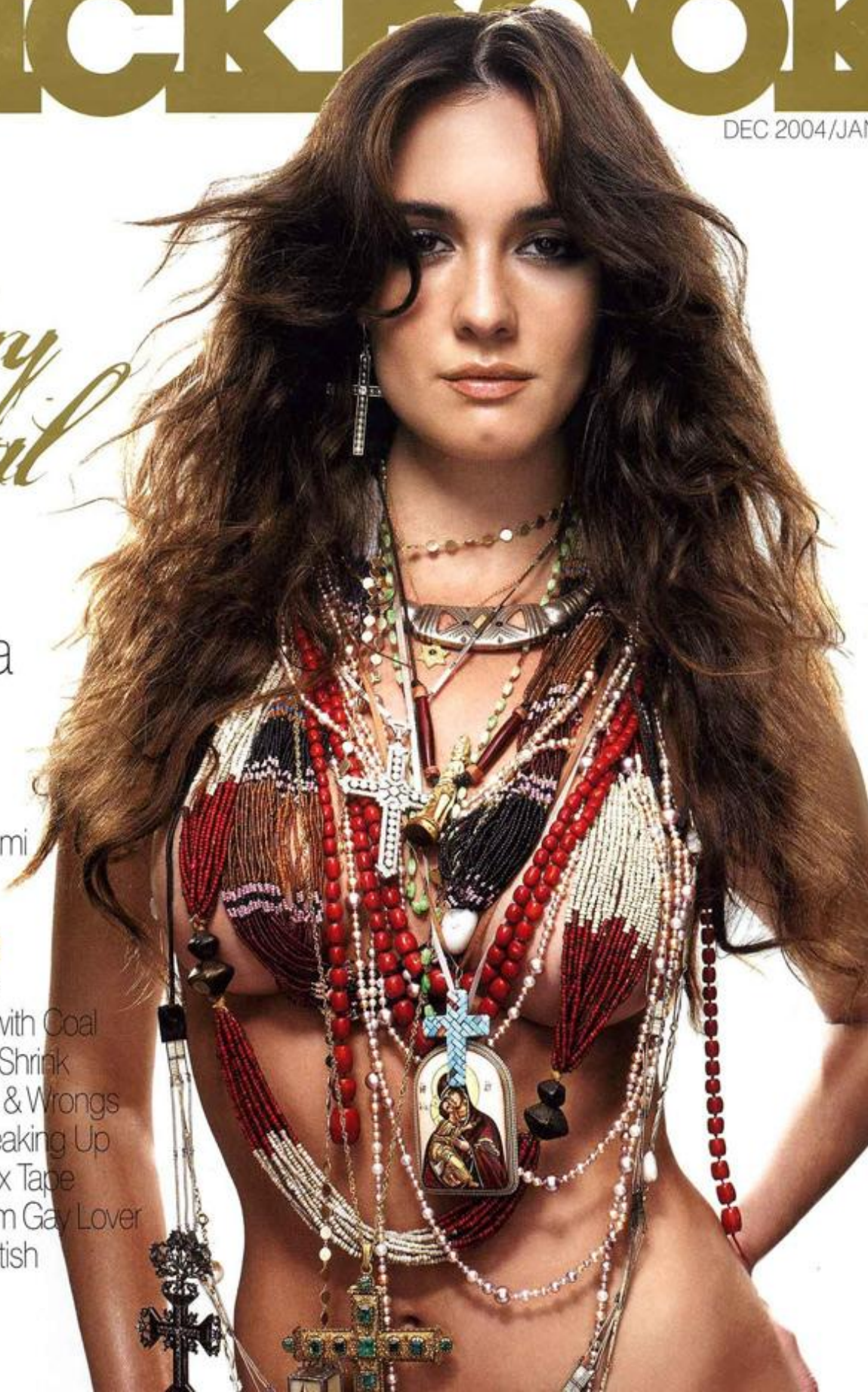
by Deborah Turbeville,  
Tava Ribeiro, Shoji Van Kuzumi  
and Helena Christensen

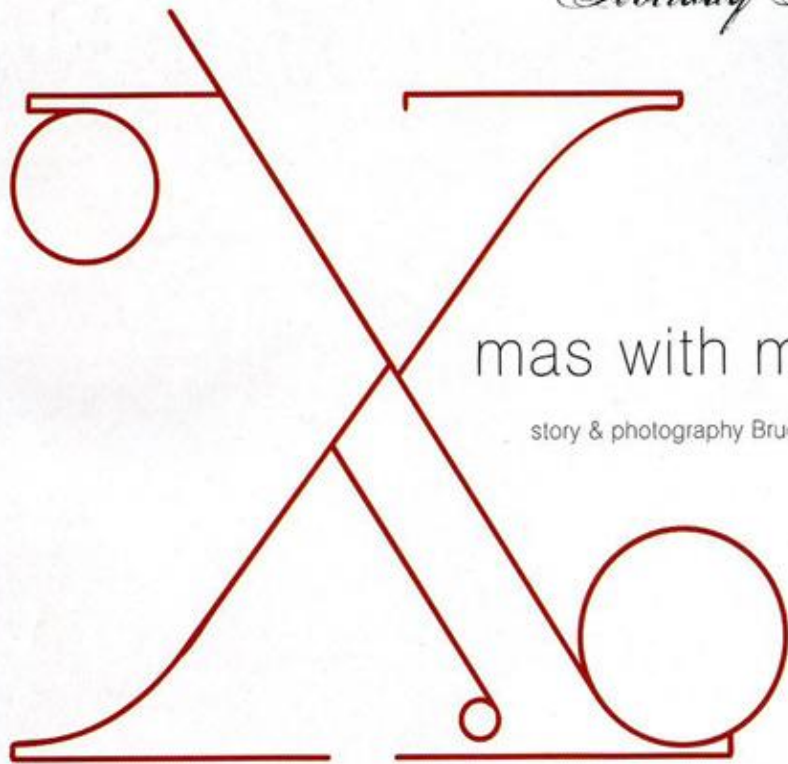
### **Ritual Features:**

ABC Pierre on F-ing Vixens  
T LeRoy Tortures Children with Coal  
Augusten Burroughs' Santa Shrink  
Glenn O'Brien: Fashion Rites & Wrongs  
Emma Forrest: Rituals of Breaking Up  
The RISE of the Celebrity Sex Tape  
Bruce LaBruce on his Muslim Gay Lover  
Jonathan Ames' Sneaker Fetish

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# mas with my Muslim Gay Lover

story & photography Bruce LaBruce

Mecca is East of the Christmas Tree

□ Muslim—if he were a Christian, I suspect his name would be Christian—picked me up as usual at the subway in his beat-up old Datsun, blasting the Qur'an on his tape deck. He beckoned me into the suicide seat, and after giving each other a furtive kiss, we headed toward his apartment to wrap presents.

At his high-rise apartment building we got into the elevator with a middle-aged Chinese woman and a scruffy white guy sporting a Santa Claus hat and a Toronto Maple Leafs hockey sweater. As the ersatz Santa eyeballed the lit cigarette that Muslim held discreetly down at his side, his pasty face started to go red from bottom to top like a thermometer.

"Put that thing out, you fucking asshole. Don't you know this is a nonsmoking building?"

Muslim doesn't like to be cursed at. Since we started going out three and a half years ago, I've almost stopped swearing completely. He looked over at the hozer Santa and gave him a big loopy grin.

"I said, put it out you fucking jerk!" His face was twisted; red and white as a candy cane.

Now I was getting annoyed. "Do you have to swear?" I said. "It's rude."

"Rude? He's the one that's smoking the fucking cigarette."

He may have had a point, but he was such a hateful Santa that I wasn't going to budge.

"He's not smoking it; he's just holding it until we get to our floor."

On cue, the elevator doors opened and Muslim and I stepped off. Unfortunately, it was also Santa's

floor. We walked briskly ahead, but his voice rang out from behind us—"Fucking faggots!"

Muslim doesn't like to be called a faggot. He doesn't even like the word "homosexual." He refers to himself as "unheterosexual." He stopped abruptly, turned around, and ran back, yelling at Santa in the six different languages he speaks, including Swahili. Santa turned tail and fled.

Inside Muslim's apartment our adrenalin was running so high that we immediately had to strip and have it off. I took his cock into my mouth while looking up at his handsome, swarthy, bearded face. As we were late for the long drive up to my parents' farm about 150 miles north of Toronto, we slipped quickly into our true believer versus infidel routine and came quickly.

We drove into the night, stopping at various truck stops and gas stations to allow Muslim to pray. He was praying a lot then—sometimes five times a day—so I was used to seeing him do it in some pretty unlikely places: behind a big Ford truck in a donut store parking lot, on the grounds of an amusement park, even on the side of the road. He always had his trusty compass with him to point him in the direction of Mecca.

After getting lost several times, we pulled into the snow-covered laneway of the farm I grew up on. Muslim shivered under the faux-fur parka that compels everyone to tell him that he looks like an Eskimo. He removed it in the house as we greeted my family. My parents, who, despite both having only grade school education, are smart as whips, know exactly what's going on between me and Muslim. But in the old-

school tradition, almost everything concerning homosexuality remains unspoken. It's convenient, considering that Muslim, who was once in an arranged marriage, and has a daughter to whom he is devoted also prefers it that way.

When it was time to go to bed, my two mischievous younger sisters suggested in front of the whole family that Muslim and I could sleep on the pullout couch in the den. Feigning mild shock, I informed them that I would be retiring to the bed I slept in as a boy, and Muslim could sleep on the couch.

Muslim performed his final daily prayers in front of the Christmas tree as members of my family stepped gingerly over him, careful to circumnavigate the little glass vial that he uses in his ritual containing earth from the holy city of Karbala, where the prophet Mohammed's grandson Hussein was martyred. As a Shiite, Muslim isn't supposed to drink or dance or even listen to music, but he's more of a Sufi at heart and sometimes does all three. He also loves his marijuana, so after everyone else was nestled snugly in their beds we smoked a joint outside on the deck like I used to do as a teenager. Despite his asthma, he lit up a cigarette as well. Muslim also has eczema, is left-handed, and color blind, and suffers from depression—the Shia spend the first two months of their new year in mourning, so they're not the happiest bunch to begin with—but I guess that's why I love him. When I was sure everyone else was asleep, I sneaked downstairs to the den and crawled into bed with him, and by the lights of the blinking Christmas tree, we did it once again.

